United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping meets with Rwandan Government military leaders in Kigali, as partial truce holds in city; Ghana, Senegal and Ethiopia announce troop contributions to UNAMIR.

+ Members of Human Rights Commission call for appointment of special rapporteur and human rights monitors to follow situation in Rwanda; Chairman proposes investigations of rights violations and acts of genocide, with view to prosecuting those responsible.

+ MICIVIH condemns murders of four political militants in Haiti; says members of organizations which support return of constitutional order are being systematically eliminated.

+ Addressing Conference on Sarajevo, Special Representative Akashi reiterates need for political settlement negotiated by Bosnian parties; says restoration of essential public service in city requires systematic and coordinated approach.

+ Acting Special Representative for Somalia opens Lower Juba Reconciliation Conference in Kismayo.

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The Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations, Iqbal Riza, today held talks in Kigali with Rwandan Government military leaders, including the Chiefs-of-Staff of the Army and the Gendarmerie. A United Nations spokesman said Mr. Riza and the Secretary-General's Military Adviser, General Maurice Baril, flew into the city from Nairobi, following talks in Northern Rwanda yesterday with the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). The spokesman said a partial truce was still being observed in Kigali, but fighting continued throughout the rest of the country.

Meanwhile, the Governments of Ghana, Senegal and Ethiopia have announced that they will contribute troops to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Ghana has agreed to restore its unit in Kigali to battalion strength, while Senegal and Ethiopia have each pledged a battalion. The

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United Nations is holding discussions with other potential troop contributors, the spokesman added.

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Members of the Commission on Human Rights today called for the appointment of a special rapporteur and human rights monitors to follow the situation in Rwanda. Beginning a two-day special session in Geneva this morning, the Commission emphasized that those responsible for the atrocities in that country must be held accountable. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala Lasso, said that the list of innocent victims kept growing in a war that would be "inscribed in the darkest annals of human history". Not since the Second World War had there been so many dead -- possibly 500,000 -- in so short a time. He urged the Commission to take concrete action to ensure respect for fundamental human rights in Rwanda.

Commission Chairman Peter Van Wulfften Palthe (Netherlands) called for immediate action to alleviate the plight of the Rwandan people. He proposed that experts be sent to the area immediately, to investigate human rights violations and acts of genocide, so as to establish a basis for the prosecution of every individual responsible for those crimes.

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The International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) has condemned the murders of four political militants in the Cité Soleil neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince on Sunday night. Each of the victims was shot dead in cold blood, while another six people were wounded the same night.

MICIVIH noted that the same group of armed civilians had been responsible for each of the killings, and that there had already been numerous attacks of the same type in Cité Soleil. The Mission said it appeared that members of popular organizations which supported the return of constitutional order in Haiti were being systematically eliminated.

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The Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, today said that the reconstruction of Sarajevo would require an overall political settlement negotiated by the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Addressing the Coordination Conference on the Plan of Action for Sarajevo in Vienna today, he stressed that the United Nations was fully committed to achieving a total and immediate end to the fighting on the ground.

Mr. Akashi said that the people of Sarajevo had made significant progress towards the restoration of their city since the cease-fire had come into effect there more than one hundred days ago. Electricity services were being restored, some trams were running and small shops were reopening. It was now time to adopt a more systematic and coordinated approach to the restoration of essential public services. While emergency aid was still essential to

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Sarajevo's survival, a smooth and phased transition to rehabilitation and reconstruction had to be carefully planned. Priorities had to be clearly defined to make the best use of limited resources.

The work of restoring essential services to Sarajevo could not be confined to the city itself, Mr. Akashi noted. Some services were an integral part of larger networks, and planning must take into account infrastructural issues in the rest of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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The Secretary-General's Acting Special Representative for Somalia, Lansana Kouyate, today opened the Lower Juba Reconciliation Conference in the city of Kismayo. The gathering of Somali political leaders is the first of a series of three meetings designed to culminate in the formation of a transitional government. According to a United Nations spokesman, rival Somali political factions reached an important reconciliation yesterday in Kismayo which allowed the conference to go ahead.

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